

Region VI

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Mitigation Message is a newsletter for Project Impact Communities, Partners and Team Members and is published by FEMA Region VI Mitigation Division.

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Mitigation Message

A newsletter for Region VI Project Impact Communities, Partners, and Team Members

Meet Joe Allbaugh

Joe M. Allbaugh, called "Big Country" by his boss President Bush, was confirmed on February 15, 2001 as Bush's selection to become Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Director Allbaugh brings a wealth of governmental and managerial experience to his new position. Mr. Allbaugh once served as the Oklahoma Deputy Secretary of Transportation where he was responsible for the Department's legislative and public affairs initiatives, as well as implementation of the state's transportation plan. From this position, he began his association with Bush in 1994. Bush selected him to serve as Campaign Manager for Bush's first gubernatorial campaign. When Bush won the race for governor, Allbaugh became the Governor's Chief of Staff, overseeing a staff of 200 and all day-to-day activities in the office.



As Chief of Staff, Mr. Allbaugh was the Governor's point person for all emergency and disaster events. During his five and one-half-year tenure, he managed nine Presidential Disaster Declarations for Texas.

Just prior to confirmation, Mr. Allbaugh served as the National Campaign Manager for Bush-Cheney 2000, Inc. in their successful bid for the Presidency of the United States.

Mr. Allbaugh is a native Oklahoman and graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1975 with a BA in political science.

Director Allbaugh's family consists of wife Diane, an attorney, and three children. They will be moving from Austin, TX to Washington, D. C.



Masters of Disaster is an educational curriculum for grades kindergarten through eighth that integrates information about the origins and impacts of natural hazards in eight lesson plans. Project Impact community, Arkadelphia, Arkansas has purchased several kits for their schools with Project Impact funding. For more information, go online at:
www.redcross.org/disaster/masters



ALLISON'S AFTERMATH

Home Recovery Fair

Mother Nature constantly reminds us that we need to take her seriously. When Tropical Storm Allison dumped 36 inches of rain throughout Houston and a 28 county-wide area causing 23 deaths and billions in damages, complacency evaporated. It was replaced by the determined resolve of local, state, and federal leaders, citizens, agencies and groups to never let this happen again.

In an effort to help flood victims resolve issues resulting from the storm, the Houston Homebuilders Association and Houston/Harris County Project Impact conceived a plan for a Home Recovery Fair. The Fair would reach the greatest number of victims and offer a wide variety of informational booths and educational breakout seminars concerning

home repair, basic construction practices, avoiding fraud, disaster preparedness and coping with the effects of disaster.

The Fair was held Saturday, July 7 from

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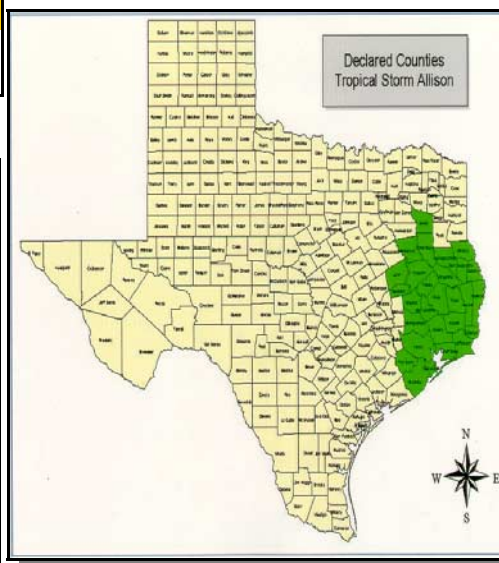
Tractor trailers litter a Houston highway that was inundated with flood waters.

**"We never want
them to go through
this again!"**

--Christy Durham
Project Impact
Coordinator



Aerial photo showing extensive flooding north of downtown caused by Tropical Storm Allison.



Green areas show counties included in the Presidential Disaster declaration resulting from Tropical Storm Allison.

Thank You

I would like to thank those of you who participated in the Home Recovery Fair.

HUGE Special Thanks to TOY WOOD, Greater Houston Builders Association; Thanks to our Harris County Project Impact Partners:

Dana Easley--HARC

Andrea Smith--North Channel EMS

David Wood--ENPRO Distributing

Karen Overgaard--Overgaard and Associates

WD Koempel--ACP

Jim White--Harris County OEM

Raymond Anderson--Harris County Eng.

Melissia Roberson--SW Bank of Texas

Thanks to our friends in FEMA Region

VI:

David Passey

Shari Brand

Kent Baxter

Dennis Lee

Ross Richardson

Thanks to our other Project Impact Communities who came all that way to help

us or donated materials:

City of Austin--Valli and Bill Wasp

City of Tulsa--Ann Patton and Tim Lovell

Thanks to our FEMA Region VI Project

Impact Regional Partners:

Enpro Distributing, Inc.

American Filter Film, Inc.

--Christy Durham

Houston/Harris County/Bellaire/Webster
Project Impact

ALLISON'S AFTERMATH, CONTINUED

Continued from page 2

1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the George R. Brown Convention Center in downtown Houston. Approximately 1,000 participants made their way through 30 booths staffed by permit officials, the state Insurance office, FEMA, American Red Cross, numerous city departments and Project Impact partners. "We never want them to go through this again," said Christy Durham, Houston/Harris County Project Impact Coordinator, "We want Houston to become a community that can actually resist future disasters."

As a result of the Presidential Disaster Declaration for Tropical Storm Allison, disaster funds were made available to the state for recovery efforts. Federal,

state, and local officials initiated a special mission assignment for a fast-track buyout of 713 homes in the floodplain that had been substantially damaged by the storm in Houston and the surrounding area. Of the 713 substantially damaged homes, 211 were repetitive losses. As of September 4, Federal funds obligated for the buyout totaled \$48,534,504.00.



Graduation Day for Project Impact Communities

Since Project Impact's inception in Region VI with pilot community Tulsa, OK in 1997, 21 communities have followed Tulsa in carrying the torch of predisaster mitigation. Each of the 21 communities were handpicked to show the rest of us how to implement disaster resistance in their communities.

Four such communities have successfully completed their performance periods, and we wish to acknowledge their committed efforts. The communities are Clay County/Rector/Piggott, AR, Hobbs, NM, Mandeville, LA, and Ouachita Parish, LA.

Clay County/Rector/Piggott, AR, 1998 communities, focused their efforts on a flood control project and the seismic retrofit of public schools and public buildings.

Hobbs, NM also a 1998 community, focused on strengthening their codes and ordinances, completing property acquisitions, building a tornado safe room and videoing the project for educational purposes, and forging a public education program.

Mandeville, LA is a 1999 community. Their grant monies were committed to hazard analysis, implementing an hazard mitigation plan for the city, developing a master drainage study, and public awareness efforts.

Ouachita Parish, LA made significant efforts at property acquisition and elevation, especially targeting repetitive loss properties. Hazard analysis, a master drainage study, and public awareness activities completed their disaster resistant efforts.

We wish them the **best of luck** as they continue their commitment to predisaster mitigation!

GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK!

Ms. Christy Durham, Project Impact Coordinator for Harris County/Bellaire/Webster has completed her work with Project Impact. Under Christy's direction, predisaster mitigation became integrated into these communities' hazard mitigation efforts. Among the hazard mitigation projects accomplished during Christy's tenure as coordinator were buyout of flood-prone properties, drainage projects, retrofit of daycare centers and, public buildings, purchase of NOAA weather radios for Harris County public schools, Tropical Storm Allison Home Recovery Fair., and others.

Christy will continue to work for the Houston-Galveston Area Council, but other projects are calling for her attention.

Christy's hard work and commitment to improving the quality of life for others is very apparent and very appreciated. We will miss her and wish her luck with her new endeavors!

COPING IN LOUISIANA

Beginning June 6 and continuing through June 8, 2001, Tropical Storm Allison moved slowly across southern Texas and Louisiana, flooding the areas with up to 20+ inches of rain. For the low-lying parishes in Louisiana, this weather event brought flooding severe enough to require a major Presidential Disaster Declaration for 28 parishes.

DR-1380-LA, as disasters are labeled after receiving a Presidential Disaster declaration, developed several task orders to be carried out by a variety of local, state, and federal



private and governmental entities. The task orders included:

- Mitigation plan reviews of effec-



This home remained flooded weeks after Tropical Storm Allison.

- tiveness for all parishes located within the Amite River Basin
- Collection of high water mark data
- Performance Evaluation: the Cost Effectiveness of Mitigation
- Update States' mitigation plans to reflect Disaster Mitigation Act 2000 standards, and create a template for other states.
- Submit State application for 300 elevations/acquisitions

Mitigation success stories were compiled and will be published for FEMA Region VI by the URA Group, Inc., in Maryland.

Among the success stories are those of two Project Impact communities, East Baton Rouge Parish and the City of Mandeville, LA.

East Baton Rouge Parish endured 19.66 inches of rain from Allison.

However, thanks to the Parish's previous proactive hazard mitigation measures that included code enforcement and acquisition of a repetitive loss home, over \$100,000 in flood claims was averted.

In addition to acquisitions and elevations of properties, the city of Mandeville, on the north shore of Lake Ponchartrain, has adopted planning guidelines for lot sizes, landscape requirements in new housing subdivisions, land use ordinances that limit the amount of fill placed in the floodplain, new building techniques to eliminate the need for fill to raise floor elevations, dry floodproofing alternatives, and the use of a volunteer "Drain Team" that monitors 150 miles of drainage arteries in the city. These efforts saved hundreds of thousands in flood claims and peripheral costs.



A flood victim in Ascension Parish takes the trash out in his flooded back yard after flooding from Tropical Storm Allison.

CHECK IT OUT: Community Websites



Want to check out what your Project Impact friends are doing in their respective communities? Check out their websites listed below:

- Arkadelphia, AR: www.arkadelphia.dina.org/pi/pi.html
- Arlington, TX: www.ci.arlington.tx.us/fire/projectimpact
- Austin, TX: www.ci.austin.tx.us/projectimpact
- Baton Rouge, LA: www.projectprepare@wafb.com
- Houston/Harris County: www.harriscounty-projectimpact.org
- Mandeville, LA: www.mandevillepi.com
- Ouachita Parish, LA: www.ouachita-projectimpact.com
- Tulsa, OK: www.tulsapartners.org

FEMA FOCUS

Highlights concerning mitigation priorities from Director Allbaugh's NEMA (National Emergency Management Agency) Conference remarks, September 10 in Big Sky, Montana:

"Sharing. Partnership. Teamwork... All of us in emergency management and disaster response are on the same team. I approach my priorities with FEMA from the standpoint of partnership and teamwork. That's the only way we'll make things happen—together.

"Mitigation must be a cornerstone of emergency management. It is the best way for us to save lives, property and taxpayer dollars.

"It's not glamorous. It's not always easy. It's not always newsy—unless I happen to say something about (Davenport) flood protection when standing on the White House lawn.

"It requires a buy-in at every level. Everyone must play a role—from the residents of a community to the leaders they elect and the businesses they run. This responsibility comes in three ways: 1. Identifying the hazard and assessing the

risk; 2. Planning; and, 3. Making real brick and mortar changes in our communities.

"Here is where we at FEMA really need your help. Become our partner in helping us find ways to give the locals the tools they need to encourage smart development and adopt appropriate building codes. FEMA needs to put the latest technology and the best tools in the hands of state and local emergency managers. We need to provide tools—and the training to use them—to update floodplain maps, create new multi-hazard maps, and develop accurate loss estimation models so that state and locals can make better decisions.

"Of course, this requires resources. So, as a first step, I am going to reinstate funding of \$50,000 per state for pre-disaster mitigation for fiscal year 2002. Let me reiterate—this is just the first step.

"The second key item to mitigation is planning, to keep people out of harm's way. And here, public support is critical—so that people can make good decisions for their

own safety and elect leaders who make good decisions that protect their communities.

"FEMA will have a clear role here. I will insist that all FEMA programs, like the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the National Earthquake Program, work together to bring the latest technology and the best tools to help you on this...So, as part of the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000, 7 percent of Hazard Mitigation Grant Funds (HMGP) can be used for planning.

"State and local governments that develop an enhanced mitigation plan can qualify for up to 20 percent of HMGP funding

"The third aspect of mitigation is...brick and mortar projects... saving lives and property...

"Along the Red River in North Dakota and Minnesota, communities are protected by levees. Many buyouts have also helped to minimize the recent flooding events there...the Nisqually earthquake in Washington state did far less damage, partially because several decades ago, Seattle-Tacoma and Olympia leaders adopted codes and issued municipal bonds to erect buildings that could withstand earthquakes.

"Because these successes are in your communities, I want a disaster mitigation grant program that incorporates States into the process. We are developing new rules implementing the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, and...

Mitigation must be the cornerstone of emergency management..."

*FEMA Director
Joe Allbaugh*

we'll make sure that States lead in determining community eligibility.

Mitigation is our best hope to protect our citizens and to maintain our economic vitality. And I won't quit until disaster resistance is a core value in our communities across the country."

Community/Region VI Conference Call Calendar

(All calls at 2:00 p.m. Central)

Wednesday, September 26

Wednesday, October 10

Wednesday, November 14

Wednesday, December 12

The Headquarters conference call operator will call you a few minutes prior to 2:00 p.m. Just stay on the line while everyone is being called!

Please join us!

Firefighter Grants

The United States Fire Administration announced its third round of awards for firefighter grants. The following Region VI Project Impact communities received fire grants:

- Miami, OK: \$ 69,000 for vehicles
- Hobbs, NM: \$112,500 for vehicles

www.fema.gov

Updates from Communities

A R

Arkadelphia: Completing projects under grant extension including purchasing Red Cross curriculum, *Masters of Disaster* for the public schools.

Clay County: Performance period has ended. See article in this newsletter on page 3. The Disaster Preparedness Council plans to continue its efforts to identify mitigation projects for Clay County as well as funding resources for these projects.

Tuckerman: Work is continuing to build saferooms in Tuckerman schools. Generators will be provided for city hall, fire and police departments, water plant, and new senior care facility.

West Memphis: The signing ceremony was held in June with over 100 agencies represented at the event. Local partners have increased to over 50 businesses and agencies. Community education activities include presentations to the Lion's Club and the development of curriculum for a children's summer camp.

L A

Baton Rouge: To date, 18 residential structures have been purchased and 3 acquisitions are in the works. The buyout is funded by Project Impact and Hazard Mitigation Grant funds. Pecan Grove subdivision development drainage channels have been constructed, addressing the continual flood problem there. New partners include WFAB-TV and *The Leader* weekly newspaper.

Calcasieu Parish: A fall signing ceremony is planned.

Mandeville: Completed their performance period. See article in this newsletter on page 3.

Ouachita Parish: Currently completing close-out of the grant. See article in this newsletter on page 3. Project Impact partners were recognized at the annual Partner Appreciation Ceremony. Partner Carroll High School has constructed a flood disaster recovery website: www.bayou.com/civil

N M

Carlsbad: Extension of performance period ends December 31, 2001. Projects to be completed during the extension period include drought resistance and wellhead protection initiatives, a water conservation ordinance, and flood channel mitigation projects.

Hobbs: Completed their performance period. See article in this newsletter on page 3.

Las Cruces: Statement of Work approved by Region VI. Signing ceremony is being planned.

Ruidoso: Statement of Work approved by Region VI. Signing ceremony was held in August. Top hazards include wildfire and flooding. The city's Statement of Work addresses these hazards for mitigation efforts.

O K

Miami: The city has requested a six month extension of the performance period to complete ten acquisitions of repetitive loss properties, the archiving of records and land management data, and installing equipment for live transmissions from the emergency operations center.

Durant: Safety film has been installed at four elementary schools, plans for a drainage project are being finalized, and plans to purchase ten floodplain properties is progressing. The city recently requested and was approved by Region VI to purchase a plotter printer for floodplain management purposes.

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Updates continued...

Lawton: Held their workshop on August 13. A saferoom rebate program, public education outreach, retrofit of public buildings, development of an Emergency Operation Plan, and adoption of superior building codes outline their mitigation priorities. Dr. Howard Kuchta is the new P. I. coordinator.

Tulsa: Tulsa Project Impact formed a nonprofit Project Impact Foundation last December to help raise and disburse funds for hazard mitigation projects. New board members will be elected in October. TPI and its partners have a variety of projects planned to coincide with Make A Difference Day, Saturday, October 27. These projects have been listed in the USA Weekend Make A Difference Day DAYtaBASE (www.usaweekend.com). In a serious effort to begin fundraising, Tulsa Project Impact held a planning retreat at City Hall on August 18. With 22 partners from the both public and private arenas, the group came together from 9am to 4pm to begin the formation of a business plan. Much information is still to be acquired for this endeavor. Local partner, Williams, took a day in June to education employees about disaster mitigation techniques they can take to protect their families and property. One technique they learned was how to build a saferoom. Employees were also treated to a mobile display of "Disaster Alley" a disaster-resistant display from the local mall.

Harris County/Cities of Houston, Webster, Bellaire: The Home Recovery Fair, in response to Tropical Storm Allison, was a huge success. The Fair provided the opportunity to spread information regarding preparedness and mitigation as well as much-needed recovery information.

Terry Moore has recently been hired as the Project Impact Coordinator for the City of Houston.

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Arlington: Public education efforts include the development of a public service announcement concerning disaster preparedness. The city has used all media outlets available—cable, radio, both city newspapers, and the Parks Department publication, *FunTimes*. A disaster preparedness insert was mailed to homeowners in their monthly water bill. The insert informed citizens about how to make a disaster preparedness kit. Gary Pipes, Project Impact coordinator, met with representatives of State Farm Insurance in the hopes of consolidating both parties efforts of loss prevention. Gary was also interviewed on WBAP radio concerning severe weather and Project Impact.

Lubbock: A saferoom will be built at Safety City, a child-sized town model for citizens, especially children, to learn about home and street safety. This project will be sponsored by Portland Cement, Texas Tech University Wind Engineering Department (both are Project Impact partners), community block development grant funds and local building contractors. July 28th was Science Spectrum Health and Safety Day. Steering Committee volunteers, as well as the National Weather Service and the Texas Tech Wind Engineering Department participated at the Project Impact booth.

Austin: Ms. Joann Howard, former head of the Federal Insurance Administration, is serving as the Austin Project Impact Steering Committee chairperson. The Steering Committee met at a planning retreat August 28 to address priorities presented at the workshop. The five subcommittees will develop project scopes to be reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee.

Austin Project Impact participated in the Neighborhoods by Design Conference sponsored by the City of Austin. Topics covered at the conference included an overview of Project Impact and the importance of community participation through public/private partnerships in this initiative, the local hazards that should be considered when designing and developing neighborhoods and disaster resistance concepts that can be utilized to help protect lives and property.

